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THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY'S OFFICE  
SOUTHERN DISTRICT *of* NEW YORK

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**Department of Justice**

U.S. Attorney's Office

Southern District of New York

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Wednesday, July 24, 2013

**United States Returns Stolen Antique Books To The  
National Library Of Sweden**

**Two Books Offer Early Depictions Of The United States**

Preet Bharara, the United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York, and George Venizelos, the Assistant Director-in-Charge of the New York Field Office of the Federal Bureau of Investigation ("FBI"), announced today the return to the National Library of Sweden of two antique books that were stolen from the Library in the 1990s. The books, which were once part of the collections of Swedish royalty, contain early depictions of interior areas of the United States, including the Mississippi River, by explorers.

Manhattan U.S. Attorney Preet Bharara said: "These two books, which offered the world some of the first glimpses of the extraordinary American landscape and people, were wrongfully taken from the National Library of Sweden, only to end up in the land depicted in their pages more than 300 years ago. With their odyssey now complete, we are proud to be part of returning these priceless artifacts to their rightful owners, and we hope this recovery will prompt others to return antique books in their possession that were stolen from the Library."

FBI Assistant Director-in-Charge George Venizelos said: "Treasured pieces of a country's heritage have value far beyond their price on the open market. Some things are not for sale – or shouldn't be. Anders Burius stole dozens of rare books from the National Library of Sweden, sold them, confessed to the thefts, and committed suicide. He cannot be prosecuted. But the FBI has a role in serving the interests of justice beyond arresting criminals. We are happy to have assisted in returning a part of Sweden's cultural wealth."

According to the Stipulation filed in Manhattan federal court and other documents in the public record:

The two books being returned are part of a group of at least 56 rare or one-of-a-kind books that were stolen from the National Library of Sweden's collection by Anders Burius ("Burius"), a former employee of the Library, between 1995 and 2004. After stealing the books, Burius consigned or sold the books to Ketterer Kunst ("Ketterer"), an auction house in Germany. In 2004, Burius confessed to the book thefts and admitted to Swedish law enforcement officials that he had sold and/or consigned the books to Ketterer under the alias "Carl/Karl Fields." Shortly after confessing to the thefts, Burius committed suicide. Swedish authorities subsequently received information that 13 of the stolen books had been sold by Ketterer to individuals and/or entities in the United States.

On November 16, 1998, Stephan Loewentheil, the owner of 19th Century Shop Rare Books in Baltimore, Maryland, purchased, without knowledge of the theft, two of the books that Burius had stolen from the National Library of Sweden. Those two books were a Louis Hennepin book entitled "Description de la Louisiane, nouvellement decouverte au sud-ouest de la Nouvelle-France, par ordre du roi; avec la carte du pays, les moeurs et la maniere de vivre des sauvages," printed in Paris in 1683 by Sebastien Hure (the "Louis Hennepin book"), and a Henry Lewis book entitled "Das illustrierte Mississippithal, dargestellt in 80 nach der Natur aufgenommenen Ansichten vom Wasserfalle zu S:t Anthony an bis zum Golf von Mexico...", printed in Dusseldorf between 1854-58 by Arntz & Comp (the "Henry Lewis book").

The Louis Hennepin book, which documents the author's exploration of the upper Mississippi River in 1680, is known for its map, which has the first-ever printed record of Louisiana, and for the first descriptions of Niagara Falls and the Falls of Saint Anthony. The book once belonged to King Gustav IV and was incorporated into the Library in 1796. The Henry Lewis book contains hand-colored lithographs and texts from the author's exploration of the Mississippi River between the years 1846-1849. The book belongs to the collection of King Charles XV that was incorporated into the Library in 1873.

Loewentheil, after being contacted by the FBI about the theft of the Louis Hennepin book and the Henry Lewis book from the National Library of Sweden, voluntarily re-obtained both books and agreed to return them to the Library. On July 12, 2013, Loewentheil and the United States Attorney's Office for the Southern District of New York entered into a stipulation, pursuant to which Loewentheil consented to tender the Louis Hennepin book and the Henry Lewis book to the FBI, to allow for the return of these books to the National Library of Sweden. The stipulation was so ordered by the United States District Court on July 17, 2013. The Louis Hennepin book and the Henry Lewis book were returned to representatives of the National Library of Sweden earlier today at a repatriation ceremony held at the United States Attorney's Office in New York.

Mr. Bharara praised the investigative work of the FBI in this matter, and its ongoing efforts to find and repatriate stolen property.

Gunilla Herdenberg, the CEO of the National Library of Sweden, said: "On behalf of the Kingdom of Sweden as well as the international library community, I am very grateful to the U.S. Government and to Stephan Loewentheil for all their efforts. I am very happy to bring these books back to Sweden and to make them available for the public and for research again."

This matter is being handled by the Office's Asset Forfeiture Unit. Assistant U.S. Attorneys Christine Magdo and Sarah E. Paul are in charge of the case.

National Library of Sweden Stipulation and Order

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